

Testimony in support of HB288 Depleted Uranium Testing for Certain Veterans

Janet N. Knight, BS, RN - retired 553 State St., Helena, Mt. 59601

New Research has found uranium can bind to DNA. This could have far-reaching implications for returning soldiers from Iraq.

Uranium can have profound and debilitating effects on human DNA. In 2006 at Northern Arizona University biochemist Diane Stearns established that when cells are exposed to uranium, the uranium binds to DNA and the cells acquire mutations, triggering a whole slew of problem replication errors. These mutations can cause cancers and birth defects. Our soldiers could experience 'downstream damage' occurring in future years to themselves and/or their offspring. (1)

Doctors in Basra claim a 20 fold increase in all cancers in the period from 1991 to 2002 . Between 1997 and 2001 congenital malformations in Iraq have risen from below 4 /1000 births to 22/1000 births. One kind of birth defect that has risen dramatically since 1991 is congenital absence of 1 or both eyes. (2) These problems are similar to what has happened in Chernobyl.

I refer you to an article on Contamination of Persian Gulf War Veterans by Dr. Leonard A. Dietz, which reports that the VA conducted a state-wide survey of 251 Gulf War veterans families in Mississippi. Of their children conceived and born since the war, 67% - let me say that again - 67% have illnesses rated severe or have missing eyes, missing or deformed ears, blood infections, respiratory problems, and fused fingers. (3).

For those servicemen and women who were exposed to DU through inhalation, ingestion, or wound contamination, any systemic uranium could be eliminated - or transported to longer-term storage sites such as bones. In the 12 years since first exposure, a study group of First Gulf War vets have documented persistence of urine uranium elevation .(4)

According to the Department of Veterans Affairs we have the following information: From WW II, 5% of veterans disabled. From Vietnam War: 10% considered disabled. From The Gulf War, as of March 1, 2001 29% disabled. The Gulf War Vets say the number is much larger and this number is almost 7 years old.

References:

(1)Publication Global Research April 10 2006: The Impacts of Radioactive Uranium Contamination on Human DNA

(2) Book: Depleted Uranium: Deadly, Dangerous, and Indiscriminate: Russell publisher: 2003 ISBN0 851246850

(3)Contamination of Persian Gulf War Veterans and Others by Depleted Uranium, Dr. Leonard A. Dietz July 19, 1996, updated Feb. 21, 1999. Go to [www.umrc.net](http://www.umrc.net) , <http://www.wise-uranium.org/dgvd.html>

(4)Biological monitoring: surveillance results in Gulf War I veterans exposed to D.U.

Published on line: Aug. 2, 2005 c.Springer-Verlag 2005

Supported by U.S. Dept. Of Veterans Affairs